LAMENTATIONS

OVER THEE O

# ENGLAND,

O

The greatest part of thy *Inhabitants*,

who have *withstood* the *Day* of their *Visitation*.

With the *WORD* of the *LORD* to thy *Rulers* and *Teachers*, who continue *persecuting* and *oppressing* the dear *Children* and *People* of the *Most High*, whom he hath *raised* in thee, and *sent* to *warn* thee, that thou mightest have *repented* and been *saved* from the wrath to come, which now shall *speedily* overtake thee.

Through one born within thy borders, *William Leddra*.

*And he spread it before me, and it was written within and without: and there was written therein, lamentations, and mourning, and woe.*

Read *Ezek.* chap. 2. throughout.

*O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the Prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold your house is left unto you desolate.*

LONDON, Printed in the Year 1689.

# A grievous Lamentation over thee Oh, England, &c.

OH England! England! Is it thy Lot to be the hissing and the astonishment of Nations? Hath 7. dates past over thee, & thou yet remainest as the Beasts of the field without understanding? Must it needs be that many of my Children must shake of the dust of their feet against thy Rulers and Teachers, and turn to other Nations, who shall rise up in judgement against thee, because in thee mighty works have been done, which if the same had been done in *Tire* and *Sidon*, *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, they would have repented? *Nineveh* shall rise up in judgement against thee, who repented at the preaching of *Jonas*, for behold a greater then *Jonas* hath preached in thy streets. But what shall I say? must the day of thy visitation pass over thy head, and the Summer be ended, and thou not saved? Must thou be made an example, Oh England, to the whole earth? Must the noise of thy fall and ruin make the Nations afar off tremble: and to be awakened, and fear before the Lord, and seek after his salvation? Must the report come from thee, that must strike the earth with amazement, and cause the ears of them that hear it to ring? Oh *England*, *England*! what shall I do for thee? My bowels, my bowels, my heart is pained within me, and I am in sorrow and distress for thee, as a woman in Travell. How often hath the Lord of Hosts of late sounded in mine ears that thy visitation is nigh over thy

visitation

dice, the Lord hath deceived me: O England how oft have the pleasant showers of the visitations from on high descended upon thee? but where, and amongst whom doth the fruits appear to the praise and glory of the dresser? Is not thy heaven brass, and thy earth become iron? Are not the clouds returning after the rain in thee? Is not the Sun, and the Moon, and the Light darkened in thee? And is not thy golden bowl broken? and the wheel at the Cistern? and art not thou going to thy long home, and the mourners about the streets? Must thou die without knowledge and be buried in the sea of misery? Must thy name become a Proverb? and thy remembrance an astonishment? what nation was like to thee, in the days that are gone? what opportunities hast thou had, of being made the praise of the whole earth? But now thou art become hardened, as if thou were raised up, that God's power and wonders might be made known upon thee. Must thou indeed be destroyed, as God overthrew *Egypt*? Is *Sodom* thy sister? Must the plagues and the judgements that are written, come upon thee? Must thou fall as the handful after the Harvest-man, and to be cut down as the grass before the Mower? Must not just *Lot*, whose soul is vexed with thy unlawful deeds, be first delivered? Must not *Noah* be in the Ark before the flood come? Then shall the destroyer pass through thee as a Gyant to run his race, and thou shalt be destroyed with a sore destruction. What Lamentation shall I take up for thee, O England, How have my bones been shattered, & my sinews as torn in the remembrance of thy day? How doth my belly tremble, and my lips quiver at the feeling of the sence of the burthen that is coming upon thee? Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging-place of

leave them. Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night then should I be eased. O How deep is the sence of thy Calamity entred into my soul, which makes me stagger like a drunken man, and as a reed shaken with the wind? Oh my soul, why art thou so disquieted for this people? why dost thou not cast off their burthen, and be still? Why dost thou meditate their terrour in the night seasons? Why art thou as as a bird ready to hasten into nations far off? Why doth thy life draw as with a cart-rope into the uttermost parts of the earth.

Is thy native Country become a strange Land? Or dost thou love strangers more then these? Oh that I might know why thou weepest thus in secret, and art become as a sorrowfull woman? Hast thou lost a son, or dost thou desire a son like *Hannah*? What aileth thee, Oh my soul, that thou thus travellest night and day in sorrow, as a mother to bring forth, or as a child that crieth for its mother? Do none of thy brethen partake of thy burthens, and do not their bowels feel they distresses? yes surely; but not because I did once love thee, O *England* I said, because I now pity thee, seeing thy dreadful doom, that I thus weep over thee? How art thou fallen, O I said, by thine iniquity? Even thy Kings and thy Rulers, thy Teachers and thy Leaders, thy Judges and thy Captains, thy Mighty men and thy Meanmen, the Master & the Scholar, the Mistris and her Maid, the Buyer and the Seller? O the Darkness, such as was in *Egypt*, which may be felt! O the hardness of heart, like an Adamant harder then flint! O the blindness, the born-blindness that is in thee, and covering thee as a garment! O the Pride and fulness, lifted-upness, impudency, and height of Ambition that is in thee?

Can it be higher or can it be uttered by the tongue of man? O thou *Lucifer*, that thus dwellest, acteſt and reigneſt in thy Children; God's eternal judgments ſhall be upon thee, and his vengeance ſhall conſume thee, and the day is at hand. O the wantonneſs, Stubbornneſs, prophaneneſs, lewdneſs, crookedneſs, cruelty, hypocriſie, deceit and oppreſſion that is in thee, O thou *England*! Thou haſt killed the Prophets of the Lord, & ſtoned and perſecuted them that he hath ſent unto thee. O that thou were not blinder then the Sodomites, and darker then *Egypt*, and deafer then the Adders, and more bruitiſh then the Beaſts of the field; then mighteſt thou hear, or ſee ſomething of thy Viſitation. What is perſecution and cruelty about Religion and Worſhip yet found in thee? Are thy Teachers yet like Bryars, and thy Rulers like Thorns in the ſides of the tender Lambs of the moſt High? Be advised, O Land, what thou doſt againſt his people; For God hath yet a ſmall Remnant to be gathered out of thy bowels, whoſe cries and groans he hath heard, and will plead their Cauſe againſt all their oppreſſors by the fire of his jealouſie, which ſhall conſume the Briars and Thorns in one day.

O thou *England*, my native Country! Art thou become a wilderneſs? Is the Remnant of the Lord in thee like the Apple tree in the midſt of the trees of the forreſts, and as a Lilly among Thornes? Are the Tearers, Devourers, Scratchers and Prickers yet found in thee? Is not the Land curſed that bringeth forth theſe, after ſo much rain & fruitfull ſeaſons? And is not their end burning? Yea everlaſting burning.

What is preaching the Goſpel of Chriſt Jeſus freely and publiquely in Villages, Towns and Cities become a tranſgreſſion? What! Muſt the meetings of the

children

children and Servants of God be called unlawful, and be broken up by the lewd drunkards, swearers and prophane persons, scoffers and scorners in them, as mine Eyes have seen, and trickled down with Tears to behold it, with an heart-breaking Lamentation over thee, *O England! England!* that I could plead with thee, as with one man face to face. Didst thou ever persecute me and my Brethren before we turn our faces towards the Paradice of God, from whence we were driven in Adam by transgression? Didst thou ever abuse, beat or imprison me? didst thou ever reproach or revile me, when I walked in vanity, want counsel and pride, and in the foolish fashions and gestures of this World? Nay, didst thou not say well of me, when Gods witness in my own Conscience did reprove and condemn me? Didst thou ever cast me into Prison for breaking Gods Laws, for lying, or for swearing, or any other kind of prophaneness? But how soon didst thou lay hold on my innocent throat, when I began to turn my face towards *Sion*, and to speak the language of *Canaan*? How often hast thou dragged me upon the stones of thy streets, and smitten me on the cheek-bone, and plucked off mine hair which God hath numbred? How often have thy Priests, Teachers, and chiefest professors abused me? How often have thy souldiers mocked and beaten me, with the rude people shouting and tearing my garments? How often have I been imprisoned since my heart was united with brokenness and desires to seek the living God in truth and righteousness? Surely above these ten times as unjustly as a child from its Mothers breast. Yet for all this I never sought revenge against thee, but often wept in secret to my God for thee, who did still quiet my heart in the contentedness of his own life and will, seeing his Counsel and end through

all

...ded ...ight. And I am yet to ...ate from ...ceiving ...through now again in bonds, through the unjust dealings of some of thy Priests and Rulers, that I have told in my heart with tears unto God, O that I might lay down my life for *England*, that I might dye for *England*; which the Lord knoweth, could freely do, that she might yet repent and be saved, in whose presence I have freely forgiven all mine enemies that have thus dealt with me, and can say to *Richard Brown*, the greatest amongst many called Aldermen of *London*, as my dearly beloved Brother R. B. did on his death bed, the Lord forgive thee, if it be yet possible, whose prisoner he died, and yet lives in my bosome, and the rest of my brethrens, as he is a Martyr of Jesus. Oh thou *England*! Have not we the witnesses of Heaven and Earth, that we are the Children of the most High, whom thou hast thus abused and persecuted, robbed and spoiled and dost thou think to prosper, by persevering in these things against them? Nay, let me once more tell thee from the everlasting God, That it shall be thy ruine. What canst thou do with us, who fear not man, who can but kill the body, and after that hath power to do no more? We have given up our lives freely to live and to die unto our God, and to hold fast his Name which is truth and righteousness, and to confess him before men while we have a being, and that shall never overcome us though thou should kill or cast prison to death all our persons or bodies, if it were possible, thy Fathers have not overcome the Prophets, Apostles, and Martyrs of Christ Jesus in the days past, neither hast thou overcome them whom thou hast beaten and imprisoned to death among us in these dayes, but they have overcome thee, and their Life is risen again, of which we are witnesses, and in which, and remains with us for ever, whose blood cries loud in the Ears of the Lord Almighty, who will avenge and plead their Innocent cause. O *England*! are thy Rulers yet again laying